



WiFi Network: Thon hotels → Conference login → Password: ESFO2015

ESFO Conference Programme 2015



EUROPE AND THE PACIFIC



10<sup>th</sup> Conference of the  
European Society for Oceanists  
ESFO Conference Programme

# EUROPE AND THE PACIFIC

24 - 27 June 2015 | Brussels | Belgium

Organised by the Centre for Pacific and Asian Studies,  
Radboud University Nijmegen







Radboud University



Cover design and programme layout by Trudy Willems: [trudywillems@xs4all.nl](mailto:trudywillems@xs4all.nl)  
Photo from the premiere of Moana: The Rising of the Sea, Suva, Fiji, 6 December 2013,  
by Eilin Holtan Torgersen (ECOPAS/University of Bergen)



**European Society for Oceanists**

**10<sup>th</sup> Conference**

# **EUROPE AND THE PACIFIC**

**24 - 27 June 2015 | Brussels | Belgium**

Organised by the Centre for Pacific and Asian Studies,

Radboud University Nijmegen

cannot be thought of as separate spheres of existence. Consequently, I end by attempting to outline a frame for the study of agroforestry and socioenvironmental mutations in Pacific Islands' contexts.

---

### On the fonua: agriculture and horticulture in Tonga

**Gaia Cottino** (*Dipartimento di Storia, Culture, Religioni, Università La Sapienza di Roma*)

*Saturday, 27 June 2015 - Harald, 14:30*

'Api fa'a toe tu'u ai a'e teve (the teve plant continues in the field) recites a Tongan proverb, referring to the farsightedness of integrating cultivations within the same field, to be used in different moments and for different purposes, and that of not reaching the limits of the productive environment.

On this basis I will open an explorative reflection on the local 'agro-forestry system' in a historical perspective, underlying some moments of the Tongan history, in most cases Europe driven, which have contributed to define the current land and agricultural system, distancing it from a more integrated and complex combination of forest and agriculture. Through the anthropological analysis of the historical terminology and its meanings used within the first documents describing the Tongan islands' landscapes, I will open a critical reflection on the two terms which have, and still are, characterizing the debate, and the practices, on land use: gardening and farming. Given such background, I will finally illustrate recent ethnographic data collected in Tonga on a few pilot 'urban gardening' projects, carried out in order to fight obesity and guarantee self-subsistence combining public health and environmental concerns, and reflect upon their impact on the local community.

### Trees 'of the ancestors', Trees 'of the Whites'. Changes in the social value of the coconut palms and their space on Vanua Lava, Vanuatu

**Sophie Caillon** (*UMR 5175 CEFCE Centre d'Ecologie Fonctionnelle et Evolutive, CNRS - Centre National pour la Recherche Scientifique*)

**Jean-Pierre Labouisse** (*UMR AGAP, CIRAD*)

*Saturday, 27 June 2015 - Harald, 15:00*

The coconut palm in the village of Vêtuboso (Vanua Lava's island, Vanuatu, South Pacific) should be classified as a socially valued object. Present before the first migrants reached Vanuatu's coasts, this perennial plant is still associated with myths and material or immaterial multi-uses. With the development of copra industry 150 years ago, it became the tree 'of the Whites'. Thanks to a cultural geography approach, the authors will try to understand the change of the status of coconut palms in its new space, the coconut plantation, defined as the space 'of the Whites' which production practices and biological material has been inherited from. Its new economical function is perceived as an unavoidable constraint since copra is the unique source of income for the people of Vêtuboso. Coconut plantation is also a 'greedy' space encroaching on the space of crop gardens and of the forest inhabited by spirits. It also definitely 'captures' land among a family during few generations because of coconut palms' longevity and multiplication. Thus, the coconut is perceived as the tree 'of the Whites' mainly for its relation to the place, the plantation. To enhance coconut's status, it has to be taken out of its actual space. But if the coconut finds back his traditional space, what kind of social value will Vêtuboso inhabitants give to it?

---

### A 'Tropical Starch from Marginal Lands': Palm Sago in the Anthropocene

**Patricia K. Townsend** (*Anthropology, State University of New York at Buffalo*)

*Saturday, 27 June 2015 - Harald, 15:30*

When writing about palm sago in the 1970s as an anthropologist working with a group of geographers (Ruddle et al. 1978, *Palm Sago: A Tropical Starch from Marginal Lands*), it was appropriate to refer to sago as affording potential as a crop in wetlands otherwise unsuitable for agriculture. Today, some of the lands devoted to Metroxylon